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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Methods and apparatus are disclosed for bridging the gap between the virtual multimedia-based Internet world and the physical world of tangible object media, such as print media. More particularly, the methods are based on initiating a communication from a printed medium or other object containing provider information using a scanner, a portal server and a receiver connected across a network. The method involves scanning a machine-readable code corresponding to the provider information from the object using the scanner and storing the machine-readable code in a memory. The provider information may include network link information, or it may include information from which a default portal server can deduce an appropriate link automatically. The link information is then extracted from the machine readable code in the memory. A user input information corresponding to the provider information may also be obtained and stored in the memory. The link information and the user input information are then sent to the portal server via the network. The portal server receives the link information and user input information and selects a multimedia information sequence or initiates another desired transaction corresponding to the link information and the user input information. The multimedia information sequence is sent to the receiver via the network. The receiver receives and stores the multimedia information sequence, and plays the sequence automatically or in response to a stimulus, such as a user request.